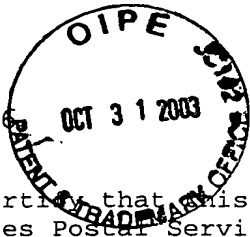


M&N-IT-566



I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

By: *JP*

Date: 10/27/03

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applic. No.: 10/656,601
Applicant : Mario Festag et al.
Filed : September 5, 2003

Docket No. : M&N-IT-566
Customer No.: 24131

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1459
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

S i r :

Preliminary to examination kindly amend the above-identified application as follows:

Amendments to the Specification **begin on page 2 of this paper.**

Amendments to the Claims begin on page 5 of this paper.

Amendments to the Drawings begin on page 11 of this paper.

Remarks/Arguments begin on page 12 of this paper.

An **Appendix** including amended drawing figures is attached following page 12 of this paper.